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Publication

Community and Social Services

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Homes for children and young people

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Ministry of
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The Children's and Youth Institutions Branch of The Ministry of Community and Social Services in Ontario, supervises residences approved under The Children's Institutions Act, The Homes for Retarded Persons Act, The Charitable Institutions Act, and The Children's Boarding Homes Act.

These homes serve children and young people whose problems cannot be met in their own homes. Approved residences offer much more than room and board. Activities within the home are designed to help the residents with their problems. Skilled staff are employed to assist. Stay in the home may be comparatively brief, for example, for a family whose parents are facing illness, separation, a loss of housing or for an unmarried mother awaiting the birth of her child. Those who are physically handicapped or mentally retarded may require a more permanent place to live.

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Homes for Troubled Children

- ☐ The boy who has run away from seven foster homes.
- ☐ The youngster who steals at every opportunity.
- ☐ The girl who "can't stand" school and so plays truant.

When youngsters with problems such as these cannot be helped while living in their own home or a foster home, they may be admitted to a residential program.

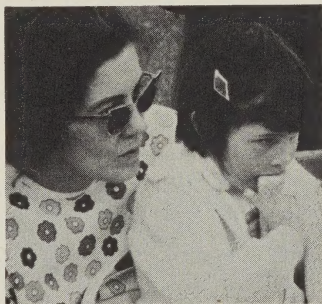
Trained child care workers, social workers, and other experienced staff will try to help them overcome their problems, so they can return to living in a family.

Children's Residences for Temporary Care

- ☐ Parents are in an accident.
- ☐ A single mother must be in hospital for an extended period.
- ☐ A father caring for the children on his own must travel on his job.

In many cases such as these, family crisis necessitates the youngsters residing outside the home. In most cases, the residence arranges to accommodate

all the children in a family and the children stay for periods from a few months to two years. The children range in age from 3-16 and attend local public schools. They are also encouraged to be involved in community organization such as Church, Brownies, Scouts, etc.



Youth Residences

- ☐ The young person who is frightened because he realizes his use of drugs is no longer "experimental".
- ☐ The boy who is ready to leave training school but is not old enough to live on his own.
- ☐ The teenager whose foster parents find him undisciplined and too difficult to cope with.

Many residences serve such troubled teenagers

and young adults unable to live either with their own family or independently. The programs offered serve young people with a variety of problems including emotional disturbance, drug abuse and trouble with the law. The residential programs are designed in such a way as to help these young people to move towards self-reliance and independence. Most of the residents either attend school or work in the community. There are 29 such residences in Ontario receiving assistance through the Children's and Youth Institutions Branch.

Homes for Unmarried Mothers

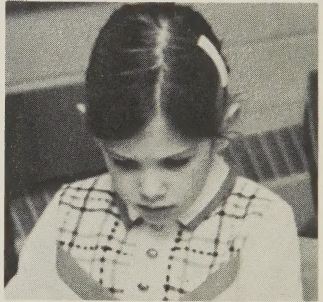
- ☐ What should she tell her friends and family?
- ☐ Should she keep her baby or give it up for adoption?
- ☐ How can she complete her schooling?

These are some of the questions unmarried pregnant young women must answer. In order to resolve these and a host of other questions, some girls and young women need more help and support than can be provided in their own homes.

Homes for unmarried mothers serve girls and

women who are in need of varied residential programs during pregnancy. Also some women who have recently given birth and are in need of help to re-establish themselves may continue in residence for brief periods.

Working closely with local Children's Aid Societies, qualified personnel provide supportive services to the residents. Some of the residences have staff able to cope with emotionally disturbed girls. There is an emphasis placed on the continuation of the resident's education and local school boards often provide teachers for this purpose. Those young women who plan to work are helped in preparing for a job.



In Ontario, 13 homes receive financial assistance from the Ministry.

Home for Retarded Persons

- ☐ Half a dozen young people preparing breakfast and lunch boxes.
- ☐ A youngster struggling to master a tricycle.
- ☐ Two teenagers returning from a shopping trip to the plaza.

These are common scenes in any family. But for the children and adults who live in homes for retarded persons, these activities represent real accomplishments. Skilled staff, dedicated to the optimal development of each individual, have worked many hours with the residents to help them master the skills needed for these activities that come quite easily to most people.

There is no upper or lower age limit on residences for the retarded, but the homes are separated to care for either children or adults. These homes are often associated with a school, sheltered workshop or other type of training program, such as a farm or a small industry. The children and adults are also encouraged to take part in the regular life of the community. For the retarded these residence provide a sense of belonging and an opportunity to become more self-reliant.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services helps non-profit groups to set up and operate community residences for retarded persons. In Ontario, there are presently 16 such residences receiving financial



assistance from the Ministry, as well as half a dozen new homes scheduled to open soon.

Boarding Homes

- ☐ The couple who have a retarded child of their own and would like to help raise other such children.
- ☐ The person who has cared for troubled children as a foster parent.
- ☐ The person who has worked with teenagers in a youth residence.

People with backgrounds like this may decide to start a children's boarding home. These homes must be

registered under The Children's Boarding Homes Act, to assure that they meet prescribed standards, as well as local zoning, health, and fire requirements.

Some boarding homes serve troubled children and teenagers. Others serve retarded children who can benefit from a community setting.

Staff at the Residences

Increasingly, the basic staff in children's and youth residences are trained child care workers.

There is also a need for trained social workers with interest in residential programs.

People with varied kinds of training and experience in working with children and youth have found a place in residential programs.

Help Available from the Ministry

Charitable non-profit corporations establishing programs and building residences under The Children's Institutions Act, the Homes for Retarded Persons Act or The Charitable Institutions Act, receive help in planning from the Children's and Youth Institutions Branch of the



Ministry of Community and Social Services. The Ministry makes grants towards the construction or acquisition of buildings for these programs and also subsidizes approximately 80 per cent of the average daily cost of operation. All such homes provide service regardless of faith, racial origin, or length of time in Ontario.

Once a residence is established, The Children's and Youth Institutions Branch continues to provide advice and help with all aspects of programs. Contacts are maintained with boards of directors as well as staff members of all homes.

Private individuals who wish to operate group homes or boarding home for five or more children are required to register the home under The Children's Boarding Homes Act.

These homes receive no financial assistance; however, the Children's and Youth Institutions Branch offers advice and guidance to them. These homes generally serve troubled or retarded children who cannot live in a family setting.

Other Available Services

Day care programs are becoming an important service for mentally retarded, physically handicapped and troubled children. The Day Nurseries Branch of this Ministry and the Children's and Youth Institutions Branch have worked together in several cases to develop residences which incorporate day nurseries. Similarly, the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Branch of this Ministry has supported a workshop in a residence for handicapped adults.

A most important service available to some physically disabled and retarded adults, through the Family Benefits Branch of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, is the disabled persons allowance, called Family Benefits. Many people living in residences supervised by this Ministry receive this allowance which pays part

of the cost of their maintenance as well as providing a comfort allowance.

For information about starting such a residence, employment possibilities, suitable programs for individuals, or questions on specific residences, please contact:

Children's and Youth Institutions Branch,
The Ministry of Community and Social Services,
7th Floor, Hepburn Block,
Queen's Park, Toronto,
Ontario.



For further general information on programs of Ministry of Community and Social Services, please contact:

Communications Branch,
The Ministry of Community and Social Services,
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